INTERSTATE 90
I-190 to IL 43

Interstate 90: Interstate 190 to Harlem Avenue
Phase I Study
P-91-128-12
PTB 162/001

Project Working Group (PWG) Meeting #3

The third Project Working Group (PWG) meeting for the I-90 Phase I Study was held on Tuesday, January 21, 2014 from 1:00 p.m to 2:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Chicago Public Library Roden Branch (6083 N. Northwest Highway).

The meeting was conducted as part of IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process. The purpose of the meeting was to present the preferred alternative, preview the public hearing presentation, and discuss the noise analysis process and results.

Invitations were sent to community leaders, elected officials, representatives of public agencies and all stakeholders who attended the first two PWG meetings.

Six stakeholders attended the meeting. Representatives from the Village of Norridge, CDOT, the Illinois Tollway and Pace were in attendance. One resident stakeholder also attended.

The first portion of the meeting included introductions of meeting attendees and IDOT and consultant staff. The project team presented the PowerPoint that will be recorded and shown at the Public Hearing. The PowerPoint summarized the project process and the alternatives that were considered, as well as presented the preferred alternative.

The preferred alternative features a barrier-separated ramp from EB I-90 and I-190 to SB Cumberland Avenue. The Cumberland Flyover would connect to this ramp to allow vehicles from I-190 to exit prior to the merge with I-90. On the WB side, the preferred alternative would include a CD Road serving Cumberland Avenue as well as I-190. A slip ramp would be provided to allow vehicles entering from Cumberland Avenue to access mainline I-90.

Following the presentation, the meeting was opened for questions and comments regarding the preferred alternative. Stakeholders primarily had questions about the timing of construction and impacts during construction. The project team clarified the various potential construction contracts and projects that interface with or are a part of the I-90 Improvements Study, such as the I-190 improvements, the IL Tollway's I-90 reconstruction project, Cumberland Flyover, East River Road Bridge reconstruction, and Cumberland Avenue bridge reconstruction. Although the Cumberland Flyover is being designed as part of a separate project, it would need to be constructed with at least the barrier-separated ramp in order to function properly. This construction will also necessitate the reconstruction of the East River Road bridge, which will cause temporary closure of the recreational trail crossing on the bridge. The Cumberland Avenue bridge reconstruction is underway. The Cumberland Flyover, East River Road bridge, and the

eastbound barrier-separated exit to SB Cumberland Avenue would be built together. Eastbound and Westbound I-90 could be built separately, depending on construction funding. The noise walls along I-90 could also be built as part of a separate contract, and potentially could be built prior to construction of the roadway. Stakeholders requested that the different projects be shown more clearly on the aerials to help the public understand how they fit together.

In terms of maintenance of traffic and construction impacts, three through lanes of traffic will be maintained for the most part, except for resurfacing activities or work during the night. Temporary closure of the Canfield exit ramp would be necessary while the ramp is being rebuilt. CDOT asked about impacts to the CTA pedestrian bridge, and the project team explained that the preferred alternative leaves the bridge intact since the pier will be aligned with the barrier between the CD Road and mainline I-90. The Tollway also brought up that tire blowouts during resurfacing work have been an issue in the past and the project team should keep this in mind while developing construction staging.

After the discussion of the preferred alternative, a summary of the noise analysis process and results was given. Six noise walls met the feasibility and reasonableness criteria of the analysis. Letters were sent after the meeting to the receptors (residences) that would benefit from the noise walls. The letter includes a response form, and benefited receptors are asked to respond with their viewpoint on installation of the wall. A 33% response rate for each wall must be achieved, and if it is not, a second attempt will be made to contact receptors. If 50% of the responses are favorable, the wall will be recommended for inclusion in the project. The project team will continue to meet with the PWG and benefited receptors into Phase II of the project.

Stakeholders had many questions and comments about the noise analysis process. One of the primary concerns was the height of the walls. A resident stakeholder commented that her neighbors are concerned about tall noise walls potentially blocking their views. Aesthetics of the walls were also a concern. The project team communicated that ongoing coordination would continue into Phase II, and aesthetics would be addressed at that time. One option is to add vines on the walls to better integrate them into the landscape. Questions also came up about the City of Chicago's position on noise walls. The project team explained that the noise wall evaluation process has changed, and now it is up to the receptors that will be benefited by the wall to determine whether they want the wall, not the city. In addition, it was clarified that the noise walls would not likely provide much noticeable benefit when CTA trains pass, because the differential in noise will still be the same although the overall noise levels would be reduced. Concerns were also voiced about sight distance at the Canfield Avenue exit ramp with the possible installation of a noise wall. Stakeholders commented that it is already difficult to see approaching traffic when attempting to turn onto Higgins Road from the ramp, and a noise wall could exacerbate the problem.

The meeting then concluded with a reminder of the Public Hearing scheduled for February 13, 2014, which is the next step in the project process.